

October 12, 2020

Hon. Bill de Blasio Mayor of New York City New York City Hall New York, NY 10007

Richard Carranza Chancellor, NYC Department of Education 52 Chambers Street New York, NY 10007

Hon. Corey Johnson Speaker, New York City Council 250 Broadway New York, NY 10007

Hon. Mark Treyger Councilmember Chair, Committee on Education 250 Broadway, Suite 1785 New York, NY 10007

Dear Mayor de Blasio, Chancellor Carranza, Speaker Johnson, and Councilmember Treyger,

Enclosed please find a Statement and Resolution approved by Downtown Independent Democrats on September 23, 2020 Support of Extending Priority Admissions for Middle and High Schools to Students from Both Community School Districts 1 and 2.

We ask the Mayor and the Chancellor to Council to immediately grant all students who live in Community School District 1 the same priority for admissions into Community School District 2 middle and high schools as those received by students who live in District 2 and vice versa.

Sincerely,

Richard Corman

President, Downtown Independent Democrats

Enclosure

cc: Hon. Chuck Schumer, U.S. Senator Hon. Kirsten Gillibrand, U.S. Senator



cc continued:

Hon. Carolyn Maloney, U.S. Representative

Hon. Jerrold L. Nadler, U.S. Representative

Hon. Nydia Velázquez, U.S. Representative

Hon. Andrew M. Cuomo, NY State Governor

Hon. Brad Hoylman, NY State Senator

Hon. Brian Kavanagh, NY State Senator

Hon. Harvey Epstein, NY State Senator

Hon. Deborah J. Glick, NY State Assembly Member

Hon. Yuh-Line Niou, NY State Assembly Member

Hon. Scott M. Stringer, NYC Comptroller

Hon. Jumaane Williams, NYC Public Advocate

Hon. Gale Brewer, Manhattan Borough President

Hon. Margaret Chin, NYC Council Member

Hon. Carlina Rivera, NYC Council Member



Resolution in Support of Extending Priority Admissions for Middle and High Schools to Students from Both Community School Districts 1 and 2

Adopted by DID Membership September 23, 2020

Whereas:

- 1. On September 7, 2020, Community Education Council District 2 passed Resolution #153 to Extend Priority Admissions for Community School District 2 Middle Schools, and High Schools to Students from Community School District 1;
- Downtown Independent Democrats is fully committed to supporting and advancing principles of racial and economic justice, especially as these principles apply in the educational context;
- 3. DID rejects and seeks to undo any systems of education which keep racial minorities geographically isolated and separated from their peers by either implicit or explicit governmental policies that exist, or have existed, throughout our society;
- 4. Rejecting and undoing racism requires swift and definitive action from those in a position to influence change;
- 5. One troubling example of segregation within the New York City's public schools directly involves Community School District 2 ("District 2") and Community School District 1 ("District 1"); namely, how decades ago¹, a section of Manhattan currently known as Community School District 1 ("District 1"), which had and continues to have a higher percentage of students of color, low-income students, and students who live in public housing than District 2, and which the current District 2 surrounds to the north, west, and south (the eastern border of District 1 is the East River, making it an "island district" relative to District 2), was carved away from District 2 resulting in, even if unintentionally, a segregated, lower income, racially isolated student body in District 1 (See maps A, B and C and Table I);
- 6. While the District 1/District 2 border has little segregative impact on elementary school students, who largely are assigned to their most local school(s), the border plays a substantial role in segregating District 1 students away from District 2 students in

¹ In 1969, the NYC Board of Education created a 32-district school system, allowing Manhattan to retain six districts with support by a letter from Governor Rockefeller, even though Manhattan did not meet the State Legislature's requirement that each community school district have an average daily attendance of at least 20,000 students. In its announcement, the Board said that "The responses of the Manhattan public have indicated the strongest possible opposition to a reduction in the number of districts from six to five. The people have pointed out, quite correctly, that such action would vitiate the entire community district concept, destroy the good working relationships and interpersonal contacts built up over the years, eliminate natural boundaries in many cases and result in intense public opposition." Buder, Leonard. (1969, November 16). City Board Plans a School System of 32. *The New York Times*, pp. 1, 52. https://timesmachine.nytimes.com/timesmachine/1969/11/17/89384241.pdf?pdf_redirect=true&ip=0.



middle and high school due to the application of in-district admissions priority;

- a. Students of District 1, a much smaller adjoining district² to District 2, do not have access to schools in the larger District 2 and do not have priority in admission;
- b. District 2's middle schools and high schools are in high demand and should be available for students and residents of District 1;3
- 7. The maintenance and support of District 1/District 2 segregation for middle and high school is emphasized by the decision to allow some of District 1's higher income students, who live in the northernmost portion of the district, to switch to District 2 for middle and high school, while some of District 2's poorest students who are overwhelmingly students of color are switched to District 1 for middle and high school, thereby keeping them out of District 2's middle and high school due to in-district priority;
- 8. Using school district lines to keep poorer students and students of color out of District 2's middle, and high schools, and racially isolated in District 1 schools, even if unintentional, is antithetical to the DID's commitment to racial and economic justice; and,
- 9. DID wishes to be a change agent for tearing down racism and classism in our city and its schools, and integrating its student body, and wishes to do so in a manner that is swift, deliberate, and positive while maintaining rigorous, challenging, and inspiring academics;

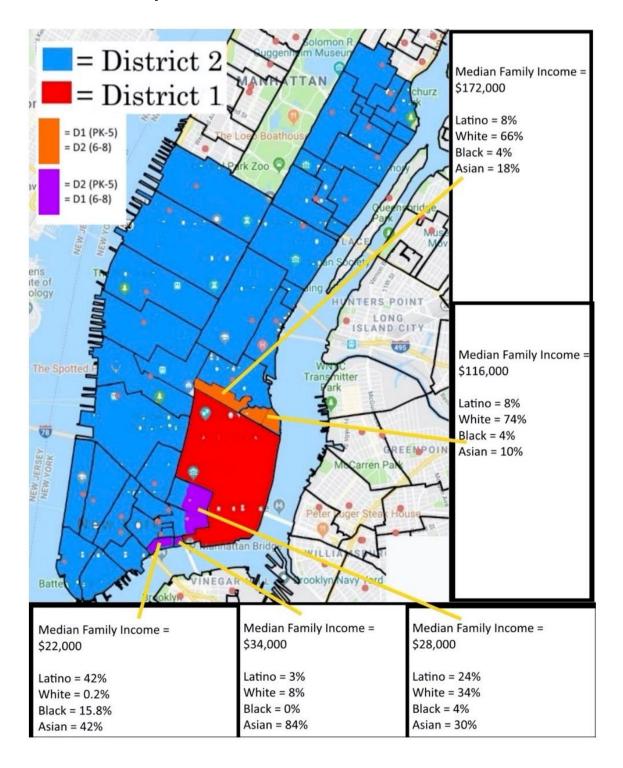
Therefore be it resolved that Downtown Independent Democrats calls on the City of New York, Mayor Bill de Blasio, and New York City School Chancellor Richard Carranza to immediately grant all students who live in Community School District 1 the same priority for admissions into Community School District 2 middle and high schools as those received by students who live in District 2 and vice versa.

² In the 2018-2019 school year, District 1 (D1) and District 2 (D2) enrolled 35,468 students in elementary and middle schools -- 6,948 (20%) in D1 vs. 28,520 (80%) in D2. Data is from the 2018-2019 NYC DOE Demographic Snapshot, https://infohub.nyced.org/reports/school-quality/information-and-data-overview. See Table 1.

³ District 2 (D2) students and residents have priority for 19 middle schools and five high schools -- Baruch College Campus (98% of offers to D2 students or residents), Eleanor Roosevelt High School (100% of offers to D2 students or residents), NYC Lab School for Collaborative Studies (98% of offers to D2 students or residents), NYC Museum School (62% of offers to D2 students or residents) and Millennium High School, which gives priority to students who live or attend school south of Houston Street (85% of offers went to these students.) High school admissions data from the 2021 NYC High School and Specialized Admission Guide, NYC Department of Education, https://www.schools.nyc.gov/docs/default-source/default-document-library/2021-high-school-and-specialized-high-schools-admissions-guide----guide-to-the-shsat.



Map A: District 1 and District 2 Boundaries





Map B: District 1 Overlap with NYCHA Developments



Map of NYCHA Developments

Based on Map of NYCHA Developments



(Compare above with District 1 lines, which are plainly drawn to capture public housing)

Table 1: District 1 vs. District 2 Enrollment and Demographics for Elementary and Middle Schools Under CECD1 and CECD2

2018-19	District 1	District 2	D1 vs. D2 Difference
Total Enrollment	6,948	28,520	35,468
% of Total	20%	80%	100%
Asian	16%	27%	- 11%
Black	16%	7%	+ 9%
Latino	50%	17%	+ 33%
White	15%	43%	- 28%
Poverty	71%	33%	+ 38%

Source: NYC Dept. of Education. CEC District 1 schools directory, http://www.district1nyc.com/d1schools-directory.html, which excludes NEST+m, a ditywide G&T school. CEC District 2 schools directory at https://drive.google.com/file/d/1nR85Cl_VJGZvTSfMV7wAtYRGd1C_tS_b/view.

^{*} The differences shown here are understated because they reflect the demographics of District 1's elementary school borders. For middle and high school, whiter and wealthier sections of District 1 are moved into District 2, and less white and poorer sections of District 2 are moved into District 1.



Map C: District 1 Nearly Entirely Redlined Based on Home Owners' Loan Corp. Risk Map, 1935-40

